



Listing of the Claims

1. (currently amended) An alert receiver, comprising:
a discriminator which receives encoded signals from a network, the encoded signals for reporting an event from an information source coupled to the network, wherein the discriminator compares the encoded signals, which include codes designating geographic locations, to codes associated with specific localities to determine whether to alert a user, wherein
said encoded signals are encoded in an MPEG-2 data stream in the form of a plurality of data packets, where auxiliary information containing said codes is distinguished from audio and video information by use of packet identifier (PID)
said geographical location codes are placed within the user data fields of a header of a data packet from said plurality of data packets; and
said discriminator uses said PID information and said user data fields to determine geographic regions related to said event; and
a warning device responsive to a result of comparing the encoded signals to the codes associated with specific localities, wherein said warning device outputs an alarm in the form of at least one of an audible alarm and a visual alarm.

Claims 2-3 (cancelled)

4. (previously presented) The alert receiver as recited in claim 1, wherein the codes associated with specific localities include codes designating a user's geographic location.
5. (original) The alert receiver as recited in claim 4, wherein the codes designating geographic locations include Federal Information Processing System (FIPS) codes.
6. (original) The alert receiver as recited in claim 1, wherein the encoded signals include Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME).

7. (original) The alert receiver as recited in claim 1, further comprising a display, which renders textual messages from the encoded signals when a comparison criterion is met.
8. (previously presented) The alert receiver as recited in claim 1, wherein the event is associated with the codes designating geographic locations and the codes associated with specific localities designate an aspect of the alert receiver such that when one or more event codes match one or more of the codes associated with specific localities, the warning device responds.
9. (previously presented) The alert receiver as recited in claim 8, wherein the aspect of the alert receiver includes a code designating a location of the alert receiver.
10. (previously presented) The alert receiver as recited in claim 8, wherein the aspect of the alert receiver includes the codes designating geographic locations.
11. (original) The alert receiver as recited in claim 1, wherein the alert receiver is coupled to a head end station through a cable network.
12. (previously presented) The alert receiver as recited in claim 1, wherein the alert receiver is always on for being responsive to the encoded signals.
13. (original) The alert receiver as recited in claim 1, wherein the encoded signals include characters inserted into a vertical blanking interval (VBI) of a received television signal.
14. (original) The alert receiver as recited in claim 1, wherein the encoded signals are included in a data packet inserted into a data stream, wherein the data packet is identifiable as an alert message.

Claims 15-19 (cancelled)

20. (currently amended) A method for receiving an alert message concerning an emergency situation affecting a user location, the user location having a code designation associated therewith comprising the steps of:

receiving the alert message comporting to a data format;

comparing codes that designate geographic locations to the code designation associated with a user location, the codes that designate geographic locations being in user data fields of headers of auxiliary data packets in a MPEG-2 data stream in the form which comprise in the alert message, where said comparison also distinguishes said auxiliary data packets from other data packets by using the packet identifiers (PIDS) associated with said auxiliary data packets; and

rendering an alert upon a match of the codes that designate geographic locations and the code designation associated with the user location.